

Liona Boyd is back in town | Beach Metro Community News

www.beachmetro.com/2014/04/30/liona-boyd-town/

By Lorie Murdoch • April 30, 2014 • [Print This Article](#)

Liona Boyd is as friendly, modest and dynamic as she was when we talked more than 25 years ago. In the spring of 1987, she was enjoying the Beach neighbourhood close to her recently purchased digs on Fallingbrook Drive, and frequenting Loons for dinner. 'The First Lady of the Guitar' had started writing her own music and combining various styles to create original pieces. Her album Persona was about to turn gold.

But her fame and success at home and abroad in '87 would pale against what was to come.



Liona Boyd, seen here near her winter home in Florida, moved back to Toronto last year, and has fond memories of her years in the Beach.

PHOTO: Tom Tracy

During the past 27 years, she has performed in countries around the world, including France, Nepal, Egypt, Russia, Portugal, the US and Brazil. She has entertained the King and Queen of Spain and played at the Kremlin on New Year's Eve when the Soviet Union officially broke up.

She dined and spent time with some of the most commanding powers on the planet, including Buzz Aldrin, Fidel Castro, Henry Kissinger, former Canadian Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau and US President Ronald Reagan. Prince Philip, her pen-pal now for more than 30 years, flew her to London after she performed at a fundraiser for his Duke of Edinburgh Awards in 1995. A year later, she gave a private concert for the royals at Windsor Castle.

She has survived a Tokyo earthquake, Malibu wildfire, a concert hall fire in Rio de Janeiro, and high altitude traumas such as the Concorde losing an engine half way across the Atlantic, and a near mid-air collision over Hong Kong.

She has won five Juno Awards, received an Honorary Doctor of Law Degree from University of Toronto, and helped raise millions for charities.

So, what's going on these days?

"My music has undergone another significant transformation," she reveals from her winter home in Palm Beach, Florida where she writes, reads, tweets, bikes, parties, does yoga and whips up healthy meals. "I'm now also a singer! I love writing meaningful lyrics, and realize this has been my destiny since I started winning prizes for my compositions in England when I was five."

Her new album, *The Return ... to Canada with Love*, includes a song about her father who passed away in 2011, and a patriotic song for Canada.

She moved back to Toronto last fall after 20 years in California and Connecticut, and has paid a visit to her old stomping grounds. "I've been to a movie at The Fox and visited the house on Fallingbrook," she

says. "That might be the most beautiful location in the city, but Yorkville is more practical for me now."

Her favourite hangout is the studio where her last three albums have been recorded by producer Peter Bond. They are currently working on a new Christmas CD.

She enjoys visiting her mother in Etobicoke, where they reminisce about their global sojourns over tea. Last year, she also had a cup of tea with Prince Philip when he popped into town for a visit. "He really is most charming, and has a wicked sense of humour."

In March, she played in Mesa, Arizona; a week later, she was on stage in Bragg Creek, Alberta. Oshawa, Toronto and Halifax are on the May agenda, and in June she will perform for the Wounded Warriors project at Vimy Ridge in France.

The fit and youthful 64 year-old has been single for a decade since her guitar caused the breakup of her 14-year marriage to a Beverly Hills businessman.

"I've had a few romances since, and am a natural romantic so I'm always hoping to find love again."

Lorie Murdoch wrote a series of articles under the Persons of Note banner in 1986 and 1987. She is following up with some of her subjects in a column which appears occasionally.